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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Wildfires Among Education Topics of NOAA's  
Hazardous Weather Awareness Week in California**

The NOAA National Weather Service forecast offices serving California will host the third annual Hazardous Weather Awareness Week for the Golden State, Sept. 21-26, 2009. During the week, meteorologists will educate the public about the dangers of severe weather in California and encourage them to take action when life and property are at risk.

"Preparing for hazardous weather begins with knowing what type of dangerous weather your community is prone to, having an emergency kit on-hand and developing and practicing a plan for what to do during a weather emergency," said Bob Tibi, director of the National Weather Service's Western Region. "Stay abreast of quickly changing weather situations through local news and NOAA Weather Radio and heed all orders issued by local officials."

California, with its unique topography that includes everything from sunny coastline to snow-capped mountains – with dry arid desert in between – experiences weather ranging from mild to extreme throughout the year. National Weather Service meteorologists educate people everyday about the state's climate and weather, but this campaign offers people an opportunity to refresh their knowledge about severe weather threats and plan for quick action when life-threatening weather strikes.

Activities associated with the awareness week are available on a special Web site set up to host weather education materials: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr/awarenessweek.php>.

The campaign will focus on specific hazardous weather each day of the week, including safety and preparedness information. The topics include severe weather (thunderstorms, lightning and tornadoes), flooding, wildfires, excessive heat and coastal weather (threats due to wind, waves, rip currents and tsunami).

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.